

Manydown details agreed by Cabinet

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PRECISE details about the controversial planning development at Manydown have been agreed by Basingstoke council chiefs.

Scope for up to 8,000 homes, a new link road, a train station, four new schools and a country park are just some of the proposals contained in the Manydown Development Framework that were agreed by Basingstoke council's Cabinet.

Although Basingstoke council only intends to build 3,100 homes between 2011 and 2016, the framework shows plans for a further 4,900 dwellings.

Four distinct neighbourhoods are to be developed in phases.

These are Severalls, Boddins, Scrapps Hill and Giddings.

Severalls lies in the north of the Manydown site, west of Roman Road, and has been earmarked as the first development, creating approximately 2,200 dwellings.

It includes a "local centre" - most likely to be a selection of shops and facilities, such as a post office, takeaway or bank - primary school, and a linear park along Roman Road.

Boddins, which lies to the west of Worting and to the north of the B3400 Worting Road, could accommodate around 1,600 homes, a primary and secondary school, and the northern half of a "district centre", which would provide shopping facilities and healthcare.

Scrapps Hill is to the south west of Worting, between the B3400 and the railway line and could accommodate at least 2,100 homes as well as the southern half of the district centre.

Giddings extends beyond Pack Lane and could comprise at least 1,700 homes, as well as a "local centre" and primary school.

Worting village has also been identified as a potential area for development, although the document stipulates this would need to be in keeping with the area.

Green space has also been allocated in the framework, which includes plans for a country park and resource centre near Worting Wood Farm, and restoration of chalk downland.

Transport measures associated with Manydown are also radical. The new link road between the B3400 and A339 would be constructed in the first phase and all through-traffic could be directed along it. Traffic-calming measures would be installed on Roman Road, Worting Road and Pack Lane.

At a briefing before the Cabinet met, council leader Cllr Brian Gurden spoke to The Gazette.

He said: "We are trying to promote a culture change away from people relying on the private car and get them to take a bus into the town."

However, Cllr Alex Green, the Cabinet member for forward planning, told the meeting plans for a train station were an "aspiration" because of the cost and complexities of the planning process.

Speaking at Tuesday's meeting, Nigel Murgatroyd, chairman of Kempshott and District Residents' Association, told the Cabinet of his worries about traffic on Pack Lane, but was assured his concerns would be taken into account.

The framework document will be sent to the Local Plan Inquiry inspector, who is due to begin considering Manydown's suitability for development in January and is expected to report back to the council in late 2005 or early 2006.